



# Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand

Certifying Centre for Safe Community Programs

On behalf of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion,  
Department of Public Health Sciences Division of Social Medicine, Karolinska Institute, Sweden

## Safe Community Mount Isa



Country: **Australia**

State: **Queensland**

Number of inhabitants: **21,636**

Programme started year: **2002**

International Safe Communities Network Membership: **Designation Year 2008**

Full application available: [www.mountisasafecommunity.com.au](http://www.mountisasafecommunity.com.au)

<http://www.safecommunities.org.nz/sc/mtisa>

### **For further information contact:**

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### **The programme covers the following safety promotion activities:**

#### **For the age group**

#### **Children 0-14 years:**

The main activity for this age group has been conducted by the Childhood Injury Prevention Program (ChIPP), which commenced as a demonstration project in

early 2003. Sponsored by Queensland Health and the Department of Emergency Services this partnership addressed injury priorities including drowning, burns & scalds, falls and poisoning. The main injury prevention strategies of ChIPP have included:

- Drowning - Work with Mount Isa City Council regarding pool fence inspections
- Drowning - Pool fencing saves lives communication strategy to raise awareness of the importance of effective pool fencing
- Injury - Hot Water *BURNS* Like Fire campaign to raise awareness of the causes of burns and scalds
- Injury – ‘Train the Trader’ and ‘Buy Wise’ program to provide product safety seminars for retailers and consumers of nursery furniture
- Injury - Unsafe nursery furniture pick up service
- Injury - Cessation of the sale of baby furniture at the local rubbish dump
- Injury – Development and production of the ‘Safety for Piccaninny – Our Little Ones’ book
- Transport – ‘Don’t give half a Gift – Helmets Save Lives’ campaign to encourage the purchase of safety equipment when buying bikes etc as gifts
- Transport - Baby capsule hire program to improve access to baby capsules
- Poisoning – ‘Lock Them Up, Store Them High’ promotion to ensure safe storage of potential poisons
- Poisoning - Lolly or Tablet? Promotion to raise awareness about the risk of children accidentally consuming pharmaceuticals

The ChIPP gained the Queensland Department of Emergency Services 2005 Minister’s Award for Excellence in the ‘partnership & reconciliation’ category, for their work in developing the booklet, *‘Safety for Piccaninny – Our Little Ones’*. This Award provides recognition to work teams, units and volunteer groups in progressing the Department’s vision of *‘A safer community and a better quality of life in Queensland through world-class emergency and disaster services’*.

The group was also awarded both the Queensland and National Australian Safer Communities Awards which are presented by Emergency Management Australia (EMA). The Awards are designed to recognise and encourage good practice and innovation across Australia’s emergency management sector, business, local government and community organisations that help to build safer communities across Australia.

Additional injury prevention strategies for this age group conducted by other Action Partners include:

- The Living with Lead Alliance (LWLA) provides a forum for guiding and driving action on the issues of lead in the community of Mount Isa.
- Living with Lead Alliance ,is in the initial stages of implementing the LEADSmart Education Program-) which recognises the efforts of local education facilities in providing information and education to teachers, parent’s students /children and visitors regarding living safely with lead.
- The Fight Fire Fascination Program (FFF) is designed to tackle the firesetting problem with young people and children. The FFF program is based on

education and development; with trained fire-fighters visiting children and their families at home to promote an awareness of fire safety.

- Boycott of bronzed soft-drink bottles to reduce opportunities for substance misuse.
- The 'Family Healing Program to assist children with substance misuse issues to reengage with their families, school and other activities
- Voluntary code of practice for retailers regarding the sale of spray paints
- Guidelines / protocols for media regarding the reporting of volatile substance misuse
- Puppets to the Rescue program aimed at educating children regarding domestic violence, sexual abuse and antisocial behaviour
- Get Bled For Lead & Living With Lead programs aimed at reducing children's exposure to lead in the environment
- Safe Access to public pool for people with a disability or frailty
- Consultations with Mount Isa City Council regarding construction of safe playgrounds and recreational facilities
- 'Primesafe' program aimed at providing primary school students with information about sun safety, first aid, bushfires etc



Puppets to the Rescue –Bluey hard at work

### **Youth 15-24 years:**

The majority of activities for this age group have been conducted by the Substance Misuse Action Group, though as indicated below several other initiatives are underway:

- 'Thursday Night Live' this initiative is an early intervention/ prevention strategy that aims to reduce substance misuse and crime by providing a safe place and a deterrent for youth, to access a variety of fun and educational activities
- Access to Beer Goggles to raise people's awareness of the impact of alcohol consumption on vision etc
- 'Thursday Night Live' this initiative is an early intervention/ prevention strategy that aims to reduce substance misuse and crime by providing a safe place and a deterrent for youth, to access a variety of fun and educational activities
- 'Sober Bob' designated driver program
- The 'Family Healing Program to assist children with substance misuse issues to reengage with their families, school and other activities
- Boycott of bronzed soft-drink bottles to reduce opportunities for substance misuse
- No Grog Here – alcohol free homes project aimed at encouraging Indigenous families to consider alcohol consumption and storage within the home

Of these, the initiatives aimed at encouraging safe alcohol consumption are ongoing while those addressing chroming tend to be intermittent in response to uptake of this behaviour in the community.

Additional activities have also been undertaken by other Action Partners such as:

- 'Volatile Substance Misuse (VSM) Accord' Similar to the successful liquor accord that operates in Mount Isa, the project will target retailers specifically to commit to a volunteer agreement to restrict the accessibility of deodorant cans and other volatile substances to minors. Retailers will be asked to place inhalants behind doors, the shop counter, or alternatively placing the product in high visibility areas that will make the product harder to steal.
- 'Enjoy the Night, Not the Fight' is a campaign aimed at reducing the number of alcohol related injuries and public nuisance headed by the Building Safer Community Action Team (BSCAT)
- 'Don't forget me when you're talkin' DV' program aimed at educating young people about domestic violence and how it is not acceptable. The Safety in Custody Group is currently working on DVD to assist those entering the watch house and explaining the services available to them and who can help.

The Safety in Custody Working Group is continuing to look into initiatives they can implement to assist members of this age group who enter into the legal system including:

- Prisoner chooses not to disclose medical condition resulting in this condition not receiving appropriate treatment
- Prisoner displaying volatile behaviour not within formal mental health definitions resulting in unclear referral/treatment pathways
- Prisoner is transferred to Mount Isa without adequate medication, re-ordering processes are time consuming and difficult to negotiate.

### **Adults 25-64 years:**

For this age group, the work of the Mount Isa Safe Community Action Partners has focused on safe alcohol consumption, falls prevention and interpersonal violence as included below:

- 'Enjoy the Night, Not the Fight' is a campaign aimed at reducing the number of alcohol related injuries and public nuisance headed by the Building Safer Community Action Team (BSCAT)
- 'Sober Bob' designated driver program
- Working with families as part of the Family Healing Program to assist children with substance misuse issues to reengage in their usual activities
- 'Stay on Your Feet' forum to discuss issues relevant to the prevention of falls in the community
- Counselling/support group for perpetrators of domestic/interpersonal violence
- 'Stingers' sporting group campaign to raise awareness that domestic violence is not acceptable
- No Grog Here – alcohol free homes project aimed at encouraging Indigenous families to consider alcohol consumption and storage within the home

Although other more general projects are also either underway or being planned:

- Consultations with Mount Isa City Council regarding safe access to the public pool for people with a disability or frailty and construction of safe playgrounds and recreational facilities

- 'Mount Isa Shop Safe' initiative aimed at changing seniors perception that Mount Isa CBD is unsafe by identifying premises that will providing a resting place for seniors
- Negotiations are underway to create the 'Ladies Auxiliary Garden' which will recognize the achievements of the ladies Auxiliary as well as providing a safe place for gentle exercise to increase mobility and emotional wellbeing

### Older Adults 65+ years:

The main body of work relating to this age group has been conducted by the Mount Isa Seniors' Safety Working Group and includes:

- Seniors' –Back in the Swim' promotes gentle water based exercise and further develops strength and balance to aid in reducing the incidence of falls injuries and also contributes in providing a safe environment for seniors to access the pool.
- Seniors' – Summer Swim - Training local community members to facilitate aquatic fitness exercise classes for seniors during the summer months
- 'Stay on Your Feet' forum to discuss issues relevant to the prevention of falls in the community
- Through consultations the Mount Isa City Council regarding safe access to the public pool for people with a disability or frailty and the seniors input into the construction of safe playgrounds, recreational facilities have been designed and implemented.
- 'Safe Access to Pools' has improved access to the pool for people with limited mobility by installation and use of Hydraulic (Manual) hoist provision of aquatic wheelchair for safe access to pool.
- 'Mount Isa Shop Safe' initiative aimed at changing seniors perception that Mount Isa CBD is unsafe by identifying premises that will provide a resting place for seniors
- Seniors Walking Program and gentle exercise groups for older people to help improve mobility and reduce the risk of falls



Seniors Safety receiving funding from the Stay on your Feet initiative.

While the Seniors Safety Working Group has carriage of the majority of initiatives targeting this age group, other Action Partners are also working on activities which will benefit this group including:

- Negotiations are underway to create the 'Ladies Auxiliary Garden' which will recognize the achievements of the ladies Auxiliary as well as providing a safe place for gentle exercise to increase mobility and emotional wellbeing
- Hot Water *BURNS* Like Fire campaign to raise awareness of the causes of burns and scalds
- No Grog Here – alcohol free homes project aimed at encouraging Indigenous families to consider alcohol consumption and storage within the home

### **In the following Environments:**

#### **Home:**

Initiatives underway through within the Mount Isa community to improve safety within the home include:

- 'Safehome' is an initiative designed to assist householders to conduct a safety and fire awareness inspection of their home. It is a voluntary program whereby householders can invite local fire-fighters to assist them with their fire and home safety needs.
- The Fight Fire Fascination Program (FFF) is designed to tackle the firesetting problem with young people and children.
- 'Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives' campaign to encourage the installation and maintenance of smoke alarms
- Identification, removal and the prevention of resale of unsafe nursery furniture
- No Grog Here – alcohol free homes project aimed at encouraging Indigenous families to consider alcohol consumption and storage within the home
- Get Bled for Lead and Living With Lead programs to raise awareness regarding the reduction of exposure to lead in the environment
- Hot Water *BURNS* Like Fire campaign to raise awareness of the causes of burns and scalds
- 'Lock Them Up, Store Them High' promotion to ensure safe storage of potential poisons
- Development and production of the 'Safety for Piccaninny – Our Little Ones' book specifically designed for use with Indigenous families

#### **Traffic:**

Responsibility for traffic safety initiatives lies with several of our Action Partners. As a result there is considerable activity underway within this area:

- 'Hydration Stations' aimed at reducing alcohol related driving offences at large events by offering an opportunity for those who are not drinking to pick non-alcohol beverages at a separate area with minimal waiting.
- 'School Crossing Sign Audits' will be undertaken to ensure all schools in the city of Mount Isa will have the same signage in regards to speed zones and that all school zone times are uniform.
- 'Don't give half a Gift – Helmets Save Lives' campaign to encourage the purchase of safety equipment when buying bikes etc as gifts
- Baby capsule hire program to improve access to baby capsules

- Reestablishment of the operationally focused Traffic Advisory Committee as a result of the Road Safety Group
- Driver Reviver campaign to encourage people to rest regularly when driving long distances
- Education regarding safety considerations when driving on outback roads
- 'Sober Bob' campaign to encourage people to have a designated driver

### **School:**

Actions regarding safety at school primarily focus around the 'Primesafe' program aimed at providing primary school students with information about sun safety, and first aid.

### **Sports:**

Two key initiatives aimed at improving the safety of people participating in various sports are:

- Workshops with sporting groups regarding safety and what equipment is needed to ensure sporting activities are conducted in a safe manner
- 'Don't give half a Gift – Helmets Save Lives' campaign to encourage the purchase of safety equipment when buying bikes etc as gifts

### **Leisure:**

Several initiatives are underway through the Physical Activity Task Force and the Seniors Safety Working Group to improve people's safety while participating in leisure activities including:

- 'John Campbell Miles Memorial Circuit' to encourage safe exercise and mobility to assist in falls prevention
- Consultations with Mount Isa City Council re construction of safe playgrounds and recreational facilities (Physical Activity Taskforce)
- Safe access to public pool for people with a disability or frailty
- Negotiations are underway to create the 'Ladies Auxiliary Garden' which will recognize the achievements of the ladies Auxiliary as well as providing a safe place for gentle exercise to increase mobility and emotional wellbeing
- 'Mount Isa Shop Safe' initiative aimed at changing seniors perception that Mount Isa CBD is unsafe by identifying premises that will providing a resting place for seniors

In addition the Mount Isa Substance Misuse Action group has several initiatives aimed at encouraging the safe consumption of alcohol including:

- Access to Beer Goggles Education to raise people's awareness of the impact of alcohol consumption on vision etc
- 'Sober Bob' campaign to encourage people to have a designated driver
- 'Hydration Stations' aimed at reducing alcohol related driving offences at large events by offering an opportunity for those who are not drinking to pick non-alcohol beverages at a separate area with minimal waiting.

### **Violence prevention** (intentional injuries):

Key responsibility for initiating programs aimed at reducing interpersonal violence lies with the Family Violence Community Action Group which has initiated the following activities:

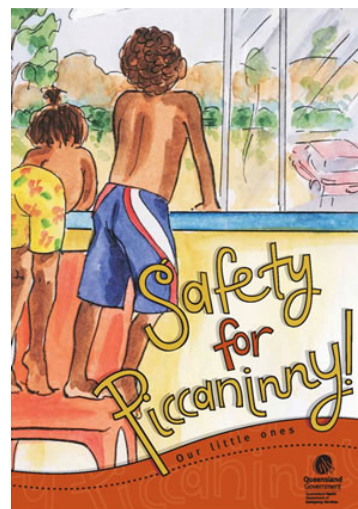
- 'It's in Your Court' aims to address the issues of family and domestic violence and to raise awareness of support service in the city through media
- 'Enjoy the Night, Not the Fight' is a campaign aimed at reducing the number of alcohol related injuries and public nuisance headed by the Building Safer Community Action Team (BSCAT)
- Counseling/support group for perpetrators of domestic/interpersonal violence
- 'Stingers' sporting group campaign to raise awareness that domestic violence is not acceptable
- 'Puppets to the Rescue' program aimed at educating children regarding domestic violence, sexual abuse and antisocial behaviour
- 'Don't forget me when you're talking DV' program aimed at educating young people about domestic violence and how it is not acceptable

### **Suicide prevention** (self-inflicted injuries):

#### **Programmes aiming at "High risk-groups":**

As indicated above several of the activities underway within Mount Isa are specifically aimed at meeting the needs of at risk populations including:

- '*Safety for Piccaninny – Our Little Ones*' booklet developed by the ChIPP which was the recipient of the Queensland Department of Emergency Services 2005 Minister's Award for Excellence in the 'partnership & reconciliation' category. This Award provides recognition to work teams, units and volunteer groups in progressing the Department's vision of '*A safer community and a better quality of life in Queensland through world-class emergency and disaster services*'.



'Safety for Piccaninny' Cover

- 'Mount Isa Shop Safe' initiative aimed at changing seniors perception that Mount Isa CBD is unsafe by identifying premises that will providing a resting place for seniors. This project was developed in response to information gathered through a community survey undertaken as part of a community connectedness project.

**Surveillance of injuries:**

**Where:** Mount Isa Base Hospital Emergency Department

**Started year:** 1997

**Numbers per year:** The most recent intensive audit of injuries presenting at the Emergency Department of Mount Isa Base Hospital was conducted in 2001 by Karen Dempsey as part of her Masters of Applied Epidemiology through the Australian National University. This survey found that over the period 1990-2001 an average of approximately 2220 males and 1210 females presenting to Mount Isa hospital for treatment of injuries annually. Over this time, injuries sustained by these individuals resulted in more than 5500 presentations per year. The Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Team is investigating opportunities to have this survey of injury presentations repeated. Until then ongoing injury surveillance activity is underway through the Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit.

**Population base:** Mount Isa Health Service District, which covers an area of some 300,000 square kilometres. This includes the Local Government areas of Mount Isa City Council, Mornington Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, McKinlay Shire Council and the Carpentaria Shire Council. It has been estimated that the population of this area is in excess of 30,942. Of this 22.7% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

**Publications: (Scientific)**

The commencement of the Mount Isa Safe Community Initiative was as a result of the work of Masters of Applied Epidemiology Student report on the injury rates in Mount Isa. In addition a more recent study of road related injury in the region has been completed. As publications associated with this become available they will be noted on the Mount Isa Safe Community website (<http://www.mountisasafecommunity.com.au/>).

**Produced information material, pamphlets:**

Burns and Scalds:

- Hot water temperature cards
- Parent awareness kits for primary health care workers and community groups
- Brochures
- List of local retailers which stock safety equipment
- Radio ads
- Television community service announcements
- Trade magazine articles
- Newspaper editorials and ads
- Community newsletter articles

Falls:

- Exercise Cards providing structured exercise options for seniors to complete at home – in standing or/and in seated positions.
- Checklists for safety features on nursery furniture equipment and bunk beds
- Newspaper ads to assist with the identification of safety features on nursery furniture and equipment

- Lists of local retailers which stock safety equipment
- Community newsletter articles

#### Poisoning:

- Set of three posters focusing on the need to store medications, chemicals and poisons safely
- Board display of childproof locks for use on cupboards and drawers
- Interactive display: 'Lolly or Tablet?' and activity sheet
- Fact sheets: 'Childhood Poisoning in Our Local Area'
- Newsletter articles and media releases

#### Other:

- Safety For Piccaninny – Our Little Ones
- Don't Give Half a Gift publicity materials
- Magnetic Pool Fence Maintenance Checklist
- Series of Poisoning Posters
- No Grog Here signs

Living with Lead Alliance has produced a Set of four posters around living Safely with Lead ([www.livingwithlead.com.au](http://www.livingwithlead.com.au) )

- A set of five brochures around Lead and your backyard; the Wet wipe, wash and eat well practise; Lead in the home; Diet and Lead absorption; Lead and pregnancy

#### **Staff**

**Number:** 1 full-time Temporary: 3 years

**Organization:** Hosted by the Mount Isa Centre for Rural & Remote Health  
Funded by Xstrata Community Partnerships Program

**Specific inter-sectoral leadership group:** Mount Isa Safe Community Advisory Group

**General public health/health promotion group:** Tropical Population Health Unit, Mount Isa & Gulf

#### **International commitments:**

**Study visits:** Townsville, Cairns

#### **Participation in Safe Community conferences:**

- 17th International Safe Communities Conference Christchurch, 2008
- 9th Australian National Injury Conference, Melbourne July 2009

**Hosting Safe Community Conferences:** Inclusion of a safety session within the program of the biennial Mount Isa Remote Health Conference convened by the Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health

**Other:** Participating in the Safe Communities teleconferences providing / sharing resources throughout the Safe Communities network.